

*Under Secretary*

**U.S. Department of Homeland Security**  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20472



**FEMA**

January 8, 2004

The Honorable Michael K. Powell  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

On December 4, 2003, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) submitted Comments to the Commission in the Broadband over Power Line proceeding.

FEMA is supportive of our national goals of extensively deployed broadband facilities and of a more robust electrical utility infrastructure. FEMA appreciates that BPL could be a major factor in achieving these objectives.

FEMA would like to clarify the record to ensure that our filing is not misunderstood or misconstrued. We have become aware that certain distinct approaches to BPL may have the potential to cause interference to FEMA's high frequency radio emergency communications system. However, we continue to study the BPL proceeding and have not concluded that there is a material interference problem or that all of the distinct technological approaches to BPL pose risk of interference. We expect that there may be ways to provide the public with the benefits of BPL without compromising the emergency communications capabilities available to FEMA.

We know that the FCC shares our appreciation for the importance of reliable communications in the context of disaster recovery and are confident that the Office of Engineering and Technology's technical assessment, as well as the Commission's regulations implementing BPL, will be sensitive to this issue. FEMA stands ready to assist in any way the Commission might find helpful.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael D. Brown".

Michael D. Brown  
Under Secretary  
Emergency Preparedness and Response